

URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE CA-TF6 NEWSLETTER

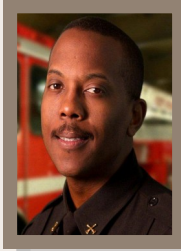
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New Year, New Leader and New Look

Things have changed in the last few months.



We have a new leader in Division Chief LaWayne Hearn.

LaWayne is no stranger to the Task Force. He has been with the City of Riverside Fire Department since 1993 and a member of the CA-TF6 US&R Task Force since 2000. He was

previously a Captain in the US&R division for five years.

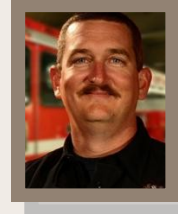
His current assignment as the US&R Program Manager requires the overall management of the Task Force.

The focus this year is developing a solid task force by utilizing each member to full capacity. LaWayne is working on a succession plan to cross train as positions become vacant.

This cross training will create a knowledgeable Task Force with members who can help one another as needed and work as a team. A member who receives the required training is better able to perform and becomes more aware of safety practices and proper procedures for basic tasks. Continuous training also keeps members on the cutting edge of new techniques and methods.

Updated HazMat and Water Rescue training will be a significant component to this year's focus on training. Training programs allow us to bring members to a level of similar abilities and knowledge.

Captain Mike Williams joined the US&R division replacing Captain Don Lee as a Logistician. Mike has been with the City of Riverside since April 27, 2001. He has been part of the US&R Task Force since August 24, 2004 and is a Logistics Team Manager on the Task Force.



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Hurricane Sandy

The hurricane that merged with another weather system to form Superstorm Sandy spun ashore devastating coastal New Jersey and New York and spreading winds, rain, snow and waves over parts of more than 20 states. The latest tallies from the second most expensive

storm in U.S. history, after 2005's Hurricane Katrina.

Sandy damaged or destroyed 305,000 housing units and disrupted more than 265,000 businesses in New York. In New Jersey, 346,000 housing units were destroyed or damaged, and 190,000 businesses affected.



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Rough Atlantic surf breaks over the dunes of Cape May, New Jersey, as high tide and Hurricane Sandy begin to arrive, on October 29, 2012.

Super Storm Sandy and our Participation

Hurricane Sandy, which came to be known as Super Storm Sandy, was a hurricane that devastated portions of the Caribbean and the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern United States starting in late October. 24 states in the United States were impacted by Hurricane Sandy's winds, rain, storm surge and blizzard conditions which caused 131 fatalities, over 7 million power outages, and over \$100 billion in damages.

On October 27, 2012 Division Chief Dave Lesh of the Riverside Fire Department was activated by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) as part of the National Urban Search & Rescue Response System. Additionally, Captain Jeff Loveland was activated on October 29, 2012, for deployment to the New York area in support of the rescue efforts being conducted in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Division Chief Dave Lesh and Captain Jeff Loveland are members of a FEMA Incident Support Team that provides logistical and command support to the agencies on scene of a disaster.

Division Chief Lesh served as the Team Leader for the "Red" Incident Support Team and was assigned to a FEMA coordination center in

Herndon Virginia and was responsible for coordinating search and rescue efforts in the northeastern states including New York and New Jersey. At one point Chief Lesh supervised the rescue activities of

Force aircraft from March Airbase in Riverside (CA) to JFK Airport in New York. The crews worked alongside other utility crews from California in community's compris-



A truck drives through water pushed over a road by Hurricane Sandy in Southampton, New York, on October 29, 2012.

over 800 personnel.

On November 4, 2012 Riverside Public Utilities deployed 6 staff members and 4 trucks to assist with power restoration efforts to the Long Island Power Authority. The request for assistance was made pursuant to the American Public Power Authority (APPA) Mutual Aid Agreement. RPU crews and equipment were transported Sunday November 4, 2012 by U.S. Air

ing Long Island. RPU crews were the unsung heroes in Long Island where many communities were without power for weeks. RPU crew members included; Team Lead Richard Holmes, Robert Staples, Richard Austin, Curtis Smith, Ryan Eche, and Frank Paz.

Super Storm Sandy

After Hurricane Katrina and Sandy, we learned some valuable lessons about the forces of nature. It's not possible to stop natural disasters from occurring, but one can mitigate the damages by better planning and preparation.

After The Flood - Some Lessons Learned From Hurricane Sandy.

IF WE LEARNED ANYTHING FROM SANDY!

1. Heed the Official Evacuation Warnings

When the governor or other public officials tell you it is not safe to stay, heed those warnings. Unfortunately, many people did not pack up and get away from the storm's ominous path. The result was that some people lost their lives and others were injured. People were stranded without electricity, running water or food. Help could not get to some people because the roads were inaccessible. Earthquakes are a real danger to the public safety in our state and we could fall victim to the same issues.

2. Have a Home Survival Kit – Food, Water, and Fuel

When a major storm or earthquake hits, normal services can be out for several days or longer. There may be gas shortages and utility crews might not be able to restore your electricity and water for two weeks. Homeowners should consider buying a generator and maybe a chainsaw to cut up fallen trees. It is important to keep plenty of bottled water and non-perishable items on hand. If you take prescription medications, make sure you have an adequate supply.

3. Have your Own Evacuation Plan

You should not rely on someone to come and evacuate you. Instead, plan your escape well in advance of a storm or earthquake. You may be able to stay with a friend or family member in a safer location. Otherwise, you can check into a hotel or, as a last resort, go to a nearby shelter.

4. Keep Important Information Close at Hand and up-to-date

Ensuring you have up-to-date lists of everyone's contact information is critical in preparing for disaster. There will be enough scrambling going on so have the basics in place.

5. Keep Cash on Hand

Those who routinely pay by credit or debit cards may discover that they do not work during power outages, like ATM machines; therefore many stores will only accept real money.

Retirements in 2012

Tribal Knowledge Lost

Historically, Fire Departments have relied on 'tribal knowledge' to guide their firefighting techniques. Firefighters have typically learned about techniques such as ventilation and water usage from the previous generation of firefighters. The same is true for US&R. As Dave Lesh retired at the end of 2012 he took with him great deal of Tribal Knowledge. Dave has been involved in the Urban Search and Rescue Task Force from its inception. Dave was instrumental in writing the very **first** US&R Cooperative Agreement. Even with the most updated training available, life experience is still the best training.

He still has mountains to climb.



Fire Chief Steve Earley and Division Chief Dave Lesh

Captain Don Lee also retired from US&R at the end of 2012. Don was a Operations Captain before coming to the US&R office as a Logistician. It is fitting they would all start a new chapter of their lives at this time. All four retirees began working for the Fire Department within a year of one another. We wish them safe journey in their new lives.



Retired Captain Joe Rosales
and Captain Don Lee

Changes in US&R Members

On December 18, 2012 coworkers and former fire fighters attended the retirement party of three City of Riverside Chief's. US&R Task Force member and Battalion Chief (Mike Koury)



Battalion Chief Mike Koury and Retired
Deputy Chief Oran Pentz

Program Manager and Division Chief (Dave Lesh) and Training Division Chief (Bob Bock).

(see pages 5 and 6 for photos)



Chief of Police Sergio Diaz and
Deputy Fire Chief Mike Esparza

Retirement Luncheon



Police Captain John Wallace and
Police Chief Sergio Diaz



Newly appointed Battalion Chief Steve
McKinster with Retired Fire Chief Tedd Laycock



Retired Division Chief Mike Fisher with
Training Captain Bruce Vanderhorst



Retired Deputy Chief Oran Pentz , retired Captain Bob
McConnell, and retired Deputy Chief Dave Austin



Battalion Chiefs Bob Valdez and Scott Blair



Battalion Chief Mike Koury, Division Chief Dave Lesh,
Fire Chief Steve Earley and Division Chief Bob Bock

2012 TRAINING COMPLETED

Course Title	Attendee	Course Title	Attendee
FEMA Logistics Training	Mike Williams	Enhanced Operations in the Contaminated Environment	
FEMA HERS Course	Brian Williams		Anthony Frausto
HERS Training	Brent Norwine		Pat Gabler
US&R K-9 Workshop	Tim Oderbralski		
Technical Search Course	Jeff DeLaurie Scott Wilson	FEMA Communications Specialist	Tyler Stanford
		USAR HERS Class	Billy Milligan
Canine Search Specialist Course	Jeff DeLaurie Jessica Stone Bruce Holms Lucia Rapalyea Gabe Sanchez Steve Wilcox	Load Planning Course	Peter Sellas
		IST Training	Dave Bakas Mike Williams Jeff Loveland LaWayne Hearn
FEMA Safety Officer Course	Chuck Clements, Shannon Smith Todd Gooch	Medical Specialist Course	Eric Peniata Fernando Cardona

2013 TRAINING

Course	Date:	Description
Updated HAZ MAT	March 15, 29, 30 May 11th and 25th.	We are first up in August and priority could be given to those who have completed the class. Have you contacted Carol Blake to R.S.V.P. yet? Tel: 951-826-5827 or cblake@riversideca.gov Five days have been scheduled for this training to accommodate registration for All members . This is 5-6 hours of class time and an additional 10-12 hours of online training. Enrollment will be on a first come first serve basis.
Patriot Hook Exercise	March 12th - 17th	This is for Logistics personnel only
Swiftwater Rescue	June 4,5,6	All Rescue personnel
Jon Boat Training	TBD	All Search, Rescue and Canine Handlers
Quarterly Drill	June 29th	All personnel
Mobilization Exercise	Tentative 1st week of October	Will be notified
Quarterly Drill	December 7	All personnel

Newtown - Day Zero and Forward By Bradford L. Cole, CFE

My name is Brad Cole. I was a K-9 First Responder to the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy on Friday, December 14, 2012 with my registered Therapy Dog Spartacus. We became part of an unprecedented approach of incorporating therapy dogs into mental health services at a mass casualty event from Day Zero.

I am a former police officer, first responder and currently own a private investigation & consulting agency. Spartacus is my three-year old Akita. We volunteer weekly at Yale-New Haven Hospital ("YNHH"). YNHH is a large 1,542 bed urban hospital and Connecticut's only Level 1 adult and pediatric trauma facility. We visit with patients, family and staff on various floors/units including pediatrics.

Given my background and the nature of our work at YNHH, I hoped to be of assistance at Sandy Hook. This is our dog teams' story:

That morning was just like every other day... until 9:34 AM. Newtown, CT became a different place... no longer a picturesque sleepy little town out of a Norman Rockwell painting. We were watching media coverage and details were slow to emerge. There were multiple reports of 15 - 20 people shot at Sandy Hook Elementary School ("SHES") and only 3 persons taken to Danbury Hospital. I knew this was not a good sign. The enormity of what took place was just on the horizon. Little did I know...

The media reported grief counseling was being offered that afternoon at St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church. I knew that approximately 700 students attend SHES and the need for grief counseling would be great. With my travel gear in hand, I told Spartacus we were going for a ride. He hopped into the car with anticipation. Little did he know...

At St. Rose, I explained my background; our volunteer work at YNHH and that we wanted to be available for the families. Monsignor Weiss gave us full access to the church and families. We met with several families before the 7:00 PM church service. Many tears... few words spoken. Spartacus just sat with the families and they petted him. We left when there were too many people present to be effective.

I learned that grief and trauma counseling would be held the next morning at a local middle school. Spartacus and I went to Reed Intermediate School ("RIS") where the crisis

counseling center was being setup. I introduced us to the Crisis Intervention Team assembling from Family & Children's Aid of Connecticut. The lead counselors invited us to join them. Our day started.

The initial response was a slow inclusion in counseling sessions. Once the counselors saw the impact the dog had, the requests for dogs in sessions quickly expanded. Five dog teams were added over the next couple of days and often all six dog teams were in sessions at the same time.

Prior, the dog teams hadn't worked together or even met before. The handlers' backgrounds, work history as well as their facility visitation profiles complemented the needs of the moment. What transpired was an eclectic group of dogs (Akita, Bernese Mountain Dog, Fox Hound, Rottweiler, Irish Wolfhound and Golden Retriever) providing comfort to the survivors, families and first responders as well as facilitating the counseling/healing process.

As word of the dogs' presence spread through the SHES families and Newtown community, many came "just to see the dogs..." They ended up staying for a couple of hours and speaking with counselors.

Families often came to the crisis center as a group. However, only one or two of them would meet with the counselor. A dog team would sit with the family members who were waiting. It was not uncommon for a team to identify a family member in need and introduce them to a counselor. Feedback from the counselors was that "waiting family members" were often more in need of counseling than the original family member who'd asked for assistance.

Many families would come back for follow-up visits and request the same dog sit with them in session. This proved invaluable because the initial counselor might not be available and the dog teams were able to bridge that divide, sharing details with the follow-up counselor. The dog teams also provided a sense of continuity in an ever-shifting environment.



Brad's Service Dog, Spartacus at work in an "I am Newtown" t-shirt.

Confidence and trust was quickly established with the dog teams. There were many cases of the surviving children only talking to the dogs and sharing the events of that horrific day.

Breakthroughs and touching moments were many. The dogs allowed the children and adults to feel safe and secure. One of the student survivors from Miss Soto's class was not speaking with any of the adults. The child was sitting with a dog while drawing and coloring. The child talked to the dog and told him about what happened that day.

Another child had a panic attack upon hearing the school's public address system. This child apparently thought there was another shooter now in this building and the school was going into lock down. This child was sitting with one of our dogs; saw the dog was not concerned, gave the dog a hug and was able to calm down. The child then unexpectedly opened up about the morning of the shooting.

A family contacted a counselor and requested one of our team to go off-site to assist a child in crisis. A dog team sat in the rain with this child for 20 minutes until the youngster agreed to come inside and meet with a counselor.

The dog teams wore several "hats" those first few days, often greeting the overflow of people and serving as backstops for the overworked Crisis Intervention Teams.

When school resumed on Tuesday, December 18th, Jay Smith, interim Principal of Reed Intermediate School requested four dog teams be on-site for the students during school hours and visit each classroom a few times a day. Smith noted that Reed is where SHES graduates attend and that six of the Reed students lost siblings on the 14th.

For the next several days after school resumed, dog teams were requested either by specific students or teachers for one-on-one time. Many of these students had been in previous counseling sessions.

Word of the dogs in both the intermediate and high school spread quickly. All Newtown schools wanted therapy dogs. Our initial group of K-9 Responders coordinated the effort to get dogs into all these facilities. We coordinated Dog Team volunteers from Yale-New Haven Hospital, Therapy Dogs International, Lutheran Church Charities, Pet Partners, Comfort Dogs and other groups. Seventy dog teams overall were involved throughout Newtown providing comfort and support.

The dog teams and community needs settled into a regular schedule by Christmas. The immediate "crisis period" was over. The initial group of K-9 First Responders took some time off, relaxed with their dogs and both decompressed. Running, playing and being with our four-legged friends was the order of the day.

Handlers, who had also been through an unexpectedly significant amount of stress, spoke with counselors present since they also recognized our need to talk about the traumatic events.

Our group of K-9 First Responders has stayed involved with the Newtown community. Some teams are still at Reed. Others are at public events honoring the victims. Some are helping forge positive memory association with the dogs by attending fun community events and hanging out with the kids. Laughing, hugging and letting the kids and dogs be themselves.

The community of Newtown has been very supportive. They have told us "We are Newtown." We are proud to be so.

Published with the consent of Bradford L. Cole.

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LINKS OF INTEREST

Many links and informative facts can be found at www.riversideca.gov/readyriverside/
Including:

- [American Red Cross \(Riverside Chapter\)](#)
- [California Volunteers](#)
- [City of Riverside: CERT](#)
- [Fire Department](#)
- [Police Department](#)
- [311 Services](#)
- [FEMA Ready.gov](#)
- [Local Road Conditions](#)
- [Local Weather Conditions](#)
- [RIVERSIDE COOL CENTERS](#)
- [Real Time Quake Maps](#)
- [Volunteer](#)
- [**Community Preparedness Newsletter Winter 2012**](#)

Of particular interest is the *Community Preparedness Newsletter* highlighted above, written and published by Gina Perez, Community Preparedness Coordinator
Riverside Fire Department, Office of Emergency Management.

The newsletter has important information for all aspects of readiness, including when and how to safely shut off gas and electricity during a disaster, how children cope with disasters and the highlights of our Community CERT activities.